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COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME AND COORDINATION
Thirty-first session
13 May-7 June 1991
Agenda item 7

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ITS THIRTY-FIRST SESSION

Draft report

Addendum

Rapporteur: Mr. Boris GOUDIMA (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic)

III. PROGRAMME QUESTIONS

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993

Section 23. Economic Commission for Africa

1. At its 40th, 41st and 42nd meetings on 5 and 6 June, the Committee considered section 23 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993.

Discussion

2. Several delegations expressed their support for the range of activities proposed under section 23 and for the related resources. Other delegations felt that there was excessive fragmentation of the programmes and efforts should be made to consolidate a number of activities. The view was also expressed that a number of the activities, in particular those proposed under subprogrammes 5 and 11, fell within the purview of other organizations of the United Nations system and that a degree of duplication and overlapping therefore existed.

3. The Committee noted the priority designation among activities as proposed under the section. One delegation expressed the view that subprogramme 5 should reflect, in terms of specific output, the outcome of the 1990 Conference on the Least Developed Countries held in Paris and that subprogramme 9 should include the objectives of the Bamako Convention of the African States.

4. Several delegations emphasized the important role of the Multinational Programming and Operational Centres (MULPOCs) in promoting subregional cooperation and integration in Africa and supported the activities proposed for the MULPOCs under subprogramme 2. Other delegations were of the view that the role of the MULPOCs was marginal and that the activities programmed for them would have limited effect. Some delegations drew attention to the fact that the proposed increase of resources for the MULPOCs was at variance with the intentions expressed by the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session.

5. Some delegations supported the activities of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP) and its role in training national personnel of African States. They accepted the proposed arrangements in providing IDEP with financial resources to ensure its stable functioning in the biennium 1992-1993. Two delegations were of the view that the United Nations regular budget should assume responsibility for funding IDEP on a permanent basis. Other delegations felt that the activities of IDEP, being of an operational nature, should be financed from alternative sources, including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

6. Several delegations were concerned that many activities were heavily dependent on extrabudgetary resources. A few delegations expressed concern on the anticipated decline of financial support from UNDP, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and suggested that the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) should try to remedy the situation.

7. One delegation said that the late issuance of the proposed programme budget document for section 23 prevented its detailed review.

Conclusions and recommendations

8. The Committee emphasized the role of the MULPOCs in providing technical support to subregional economic groupings. It felt that the work programme of the MULPOCs would increase as a result of the signing of the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community. The Committee stressed the need to strengthen the functioning of the MULPOCs so as to enable them to carry out effectively their mandates.

9. The Committee stressed the importance of evaluation as an effective tool for monitoring the programme performance and effectiveness of ECA. It recommended that the Secretary-General should submit proposals to strengthen this function within ECA to the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session.

10. The Committee noted the proposals to redeploy resources away from social sectors within the ECA programme. It recommended that appropriate measures should be taken to ensure that there was no adverse impact in the programme delivery in this sector.

11. The Committee also recommended that adequate resources should be provided for the economic recovery and development of Africa commensurate with the high priority accorded to it by the General Assembly.

12. The Committee stressed the need to ensure the predictability, adequacy and timeliness of extrabudgetary resources available to the ECA programme.

13. The Committee recommended approval by the General Assembly of the programme narrative of section 23 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993.